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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

COUNTRY

Bulgaria

SUBJECT

Report of Call to Port of Varna

ENCLOSURE ATTACHED

DATE DISTRIBUTED

31 May 1957

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2
SUPPLEMENT TO REPORT #

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THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

1.

2.

Varna is used

infrequently as a port during the winter, particularly when the Danube River or the port of Constanta might be frozen.

3. Varna Bay is free of mines. However, the depths, as indicated on Hydrographic Office Chart #4196 (Plans in the Black Sea), for Varna Bay are not correct. [] best to approach the Varna harbor entrance directly from the east from the 10 fathom mark. Once the 10 fathom mark is crossed the course to the Varna harbor entrance should be 270° true. The harbor pilot usually waits for incoming ships offshore of the point known as Galata Burnu. Vessels can go to Constanta in the north by going east and northeast after leaving Varna.

4. The port of Varna [redacted] in good condition. Harbor breakwaters appeared to be in good shape and have been repaired as needed. In the main dock area there are very good cranes available [redacted] of Hungarian and German make. On one side of the dock [redacted] there were about six, mobile two-ton cranes. [redacted] there appeared to be one ship, between 1,200 and 1,500 tons, in the drydock ([redacted] indicated on HO Chart #196) although the

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drydock appeared to be capable of accommodating larger vessels than the one then in it. [redacted] there were also shipways in the drydock area [redacted]

[redacted] west of the main harbor [redacted] some small boats in the docks which were to the [redacted]. These appeared to be fishing boats and possibly small mine sweepers. [redacted]

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5. During the time I was ashore in Varna in December 1955 I saw more than an average number of Bulgarian sail [redacted] no naval vessels in the area [redacted] it is possible that they were in attendance at a naval school in the city, particularly as many of the sailors were quite young, from 16 to 18 years of age. The only government vessels [redacted] were three small Bulgarian patrol boats, about 30 feet in length and powered by gasoline engines. [redacted] no army or air force personnel in the city. HO Chart #4196 indicates the existence of naval barracks immediately to the south of the drydock. However, there are no such barracks as so indicated.

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6. Varna is a very old town. [redacted] nothing in the way of new construction. The city's streets and roads [redacted] in very bad condition; most were very rough and badly needed repairs. The town itself had a dirty appearance and its residents looked poorly clad. Prices were quite high; even essential items such as toilet soap, toothpaste, razor blades, men's shirts, and shoes were either lacking or in very short supply. The town's water is not potable [redacted] could not load fresh water aboard on the occasion of any trip there.

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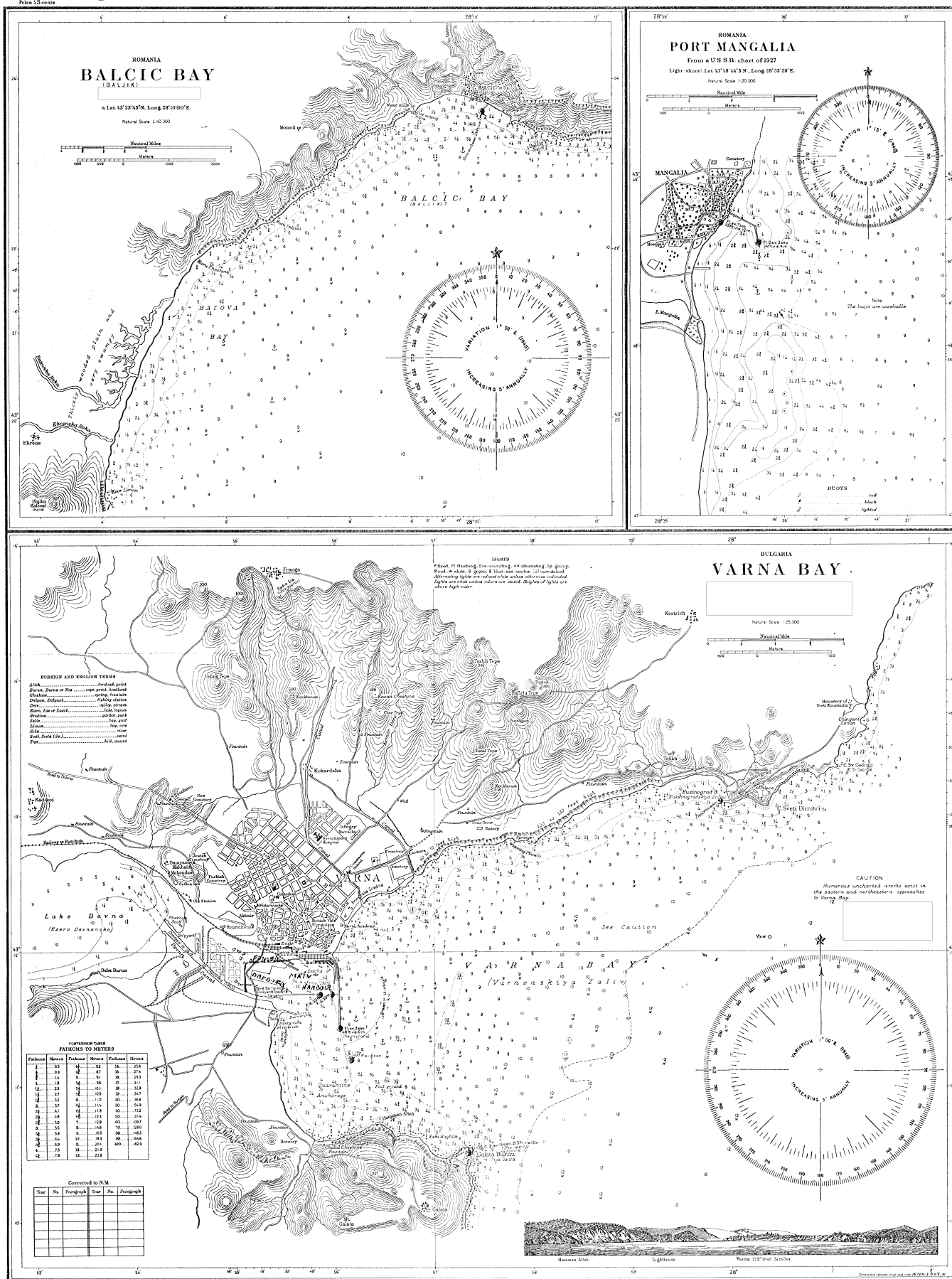
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